

# Author's Purpose and Tone

## English

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the passage. Then click on the answer to the question about purpose or tone.

(1) Why do people swear and engage in coarse language? (2) One researcher suggests that swearing is a way of asserting independence by breaking adult taboos. (3) In a society that prizes adulthood and independence, the increasing use of vulgar and profane language at younger and younger ages is not surprising. (4) When used infrequently, profanity and vulgar expressions communicate strong emotions for which there may be no other appropriate words. (5) They are meant to shock and to communicate one's deep disgust or contempt.

A1. The primary purpose of this passage is to

- a. inform.
- b. persuade.
- c. entertain.

(1) Advertising aimed at children is not just annoying—it is destructive and should be controlled. (2) Especially around the holiday season, children are hammered with media messages intended to make them want the latest toy, game, computer, sneakers, doll, music, and clothing on the market. (3) While manufacturers are busy sucking money from the pockets of children and their families, they are contributing to a growing sense of dissatisfaction and greed. (4) That serves the manufacturers' purpose—after all, if children were ever satisfied, they would not ask their parents to buy more merchandise. (5) But the effect is to produce a nation of selfish men and women whose lives are ruled by the need to have more, more, more. (6) It is frightening to see a generation being trained from childhood to be greedy consumers. (7) What chance do they have to ever become contented adults whose values extend beyond a price tag?

B2. The primary purpose of this passage is to

- a. inform.
- b. persuade.
- c. entertain.

(1) A successful doctor is scheduled to operate on a patient at 8 a.m., but it has snowed during the night, and driving is difficult. (2) Do you think the doctor will stay home in bed? (3) Not if he or she is professional. (4) This attitude of professionalism is the key to being a successful college student, too. (5) And it is within your reach, no matter how well or how poorly you have done in school up until now. (6) You cannot undo the past, but you can adopt an attitude of professionalism from now on. (7) All you have to do is intend to take school seriously, and the rest will follow. (8) By attending classes, turning in assignments on time, and coming prepared for tests, you will gradually build your skills.

C3. The primary purpose of this paragraph is to

- a. present facts on student behavior.
- b. inspire students to be conscientious.
- c. entertain students with a dramatic story about professionalism.

C4. In general, the tone of this paragraph can be described as

- a. critical.
- b. pessimistic.
- c. encouraging.
- d. praising.

(1) According to memory experts, there are ways you can improve your chances of remembering the names of people you meet. (2) One way is to make associations between a person's name and looks. (3) For example, if you meet a man named Baker, you might picture him wearing a baker's hat. (4) If the name is a difficult one, ask for the spelling and visualize the letters mentally. (5) It's also useful to repeat the person's name as you converse, keeping your mental images in mind. (6) And when your conversation ends, repeat the person's name as you say goodbye.

D5. The primary purpose of this paragraph is to

- a. inform.
- b. persuade.
- c. entertain.

D6. In general, the tone of this paragraph can be described as

- a. critical and angry.
- b. obviously humorous.
- c. doubtful.
- d. straightforward and instructive.

(1) I was sitting on a beach one summer day, watching two children, a boy and a girl, playing in the sand. (2) They were hard at work building an elaborate sandcastle by the water's edge, with gates and towers and moats and internal passages. (3) Just when they had nearly finished their project, a big wave came along and knocked it down, reducing it to a heap of wet sand. (4) I expected the children to burst into tears, devastated by what had happened to all their hard work. (5) But they surprised me. (6) Instead, they ran up the shore away from the water, laughing and holding hands, and sat down to build another castle. (7) I realized that they had taught me an important lesson. (8) All the things in our lives, all the complicated structures we spend so much time and energy creating, are built on sand. (9) Only our relationships with other people endure. (10) Sooner or later, a wave will come along and knock down what we have worked so hard to build up. (11) When that happens, only the person who has somebody's hand to hold will be able to laugh.

E7. The primary purpose of this paragraph is to

- a. inform readers about how children behave.
- b. persuade readers of the importance of relationships.
- c. delight readers with a story of childhood playfulness.

E8. In general, the tone of this paragraph can be described as

- a. forgiving.
- b. humorous.
- c. self-pitying.
- d. instructive.

(1) My best school report was in first grade from Mrs. Varulo. (2) First, she told my parents about my amazing physical energy: "Lisa never tires of chasing and punching her classmates." (3) Next, she praised my class participation and active, questioning mind: "After every instruction—even one as simple as 'Please take out your pencils'—Lisa asks 'Why?'" (4) Mrs. Varulo was so impressed with my vocabulary that she commented, "I don't know where Lisa has picked up some of the words she uses—certainly not in my classroom." (5) Somehow she even knew I would become a famous fiction writer. (6) "More than any other student I have ever taught," she wrote, "Lisa is a born liar."

F9. The primary purpose of this paragraph is to

- a. inform.
- b. persuade.
- c. entertain.

F10. In general, the tone of this paragraph can be described as

- a. enthusiastic and cheerful.
- b. annoyed and bitter.
- c. cheerful and nostalgic.
- d. ironic and humorous.